

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

USDC-SDNY  
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THE SECRETARY OF THE UNITED  
STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING  
AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT,

Plaintiff,

v.

ADREANA LANGSTON, *as Administratrix  
of the Estate of Doris T. Langston, et al.*,

Defendants.

No. 19-cv-6560 (RA)

ORDER


RONNIE ABRAMS, United States District Judge:

The attached letter was mailed to the Court before the show cause hearing held on March 28, 2023, but the Court did not receive the letter until thereafter. Plaintiff shall file a response to this letter no later than May 1, 2023. The Court has not yet entered final judgment in this matter, and will not do so until this application is addressed.

To the extent Defendants Langston, Douma, and Crawford are proceeding pro se, they may wish to consult the New York Legal Assistance Group's legal clinic for pro se litigants, by visiting its website at [nylag.org/pro-se-clinic](http://nylag.org/pro-se-clinic) or by calling (212) 659-6190. This clinic, which is unaffiliated with the Court, assists pro se litigants with federal civil cases.

SO ORDERED.

Dated: April 17, 2023  
New York, New York

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ronnie Abrams  
United States District Judge

CC: Hon. Ronnie Abrams  
United States District Court  
Southern District of New York  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007  
Regarding Case: 1-19cv-06560-RA

March 22, 2023,

We are writing you, The Hon. Ronnie Abrams, regarding a case that involves us and the Bronx Surrogate Court. We understand that the Bronx Surrogate Court is a completely different court from yours. We understand that you, Honorable Judge Abrams, do not have authority over what goes on over there. But what is going on over there has profound bearing on this case.

I, James Crawford, am the cousin of Adreana Langston. We are the heirs of deceased Doris Thelma Langston who has title to a piece of property at 901 East 218th street, Bronx, NY 10469.

I, Seybou Douma, live in that property with my family and a tenant. It is my intention to purchase the property.

Adreana Langston is the Administrator of the estate of Doris Thelma Langston. Adreana Langston does not reside in the state of New York. Now that we've explained who we are please allow us to use narrative to explain our situation in regards to Bronx Surrogate Court.

Adreana Langston and Seybou Douma had a sales contract that would allow Seybou Douma to purchase 901 East 218th Street from the estate of Doris Thelma Langston. Seybou Douma is qualified for a mortgage. Adreana Langston wants to sell him the house.

Adreana Langston can not legally sign the sales contract and here is why: The Letters of Administration Adreana Langston was issued over the Estate of Doris Thelma Langston have a limit of \$10,000.00. Adreana Langston has been trying for over FIVE YEARS to get the legal authority to sign the sales contract and she has been given the run around by Bronx Surrogate Court.

The run around actually began at the beginning of Adreana Langston applying for Administratorship. When Adreana Langston submitted the paperwork to Bronx Surrogate Court listing the assets and debts of Doris Thelma Langston, Adreana Langston placed the property at 901 E 218th Street in the debts column. Why? Because HUD was owed more money than the current value of the home.

Bronx Surrogate Court rejected that paperwork and made Adreana Langston re-submit the paperwork with the property at 901 East 218th Street in the assets column even though the Estate was not going to get even one cent of value out of the home due to the money owed to HUD.

HUD agreed to a shortsale after the sales contract with Seybou Douma was submitted to HUD. The time in between HUD agreeing to the short sale and today has been filled with one run around after the other with Bronx Surrogate Court and Adreana Langston. With Adreana Langston attempting to get the \$10,000 limit lifted so that she would have the legal authority to actually sign the sales contract.

So much time was spent in administrative machinations with Bronx Surrogate Court that HUD is now foreclosing on the home. Lisa Jones from the New York Attorney General's Office contacted Adreana Langston regarding the foreclosure back in 2019, before Jon Manfredi was given the case by HUD. When Adreana Langston explained to

Ms. Jones what was going on with Bronx Surrogate Court Ms. Jones called the court herself. Below is a transcript of the 2019 message Ms. Jones left on Adreana Langston's voicemail explaining how utterly unhelpful the Bronx Surrogate Court is. So please don't take our word for it regarding the run around Adreana Langston has been getting. Here is an authority from the New York State Attorney General's office speaking on the matter herself:

To: **V voicemail from (212) 637-2694 at 11:32 AM**

1 message

Google Voice <voice-noreply@google.com>  
To: adreanainlongbeach90802@gmail.com



Adriana hi, it's Lisa Jones from the US attorney's office. I want to talk fast because I don't know how long your recording is. I got your message. Thank you very much. So I totally understand your frustrations because I called the court also and and I get why you sound like you're not getting anywhere. Can you do me a favor? Would you be able to send me the documents that you filed with them? Send me everything you have if you can let me just maybe you could scan it and email it. It's Lisa. Jones three usdoj.gov. So that's l i s a j o n e s. The number three at u s d o j. Govt that's for United States Department of Justice. Gov, or if you can fax it to 212-637-0033. Again, 212-637-0033. Yeah, I spoke to our attorney today and just explained everything that was going on. So he asked if he could see exactly what was filed and maybe we could make sense out of the documents once we see them. All right. If you could call me back 212-637-2694 or send me an email and let me know whether or not you'll be able to accomplish this and depending on what you say will move and you know, whatever direction we need to to get this done. The house is being appraised today. Mr. Duma. I had an appointment scheduled for this morning. So I'm going to call and see how he made out with that. Okay. Thank you so much Adriana. Yeah, and I'm sorry that you're having problems. I ran into the same wall when I called. So if you could just send me like to see the letters and Any denials that you have anything that you have that was filed with that circuit court when you went to probate the will, okay. Thank you so much, bye-bye.

PLAY MESSAGE

#### So here is where things stand:

Mr. Babatunde Akanni Bolaji is Adreana's lawyer representing her in the real estate transaction of this case. In September of 2022 Mr. Bolaji submitted a petition to Bronx Surrogate Court asking that a third party Administrator be named. This was an Administrator that Seybou Douma was recommending. On February 14, 2023 Mr. Bolaji has a conversation with Bronx Surrogate Court and this is what he reported from that conversation in an email to Adreana

*"I just got off the phone with the Surrogate Court at 9:40 AM today February 14, 2023. Sadly, there is no movement yet on the file. I submitted the last petition in October 2022, the court informed me that the file HAS NOT EVEN BEEN REVIEWED YET. The court said files are backed up for months now. The only thing I am thinking of doing now is to send an Affirmation of Urgency. But I really don't think that the file is qualified for such Urgency. But I will do my best. The phone number for the Court is 7186182375. The file number is: 2013-2542A."*

Seybou Douma, a hard working immigrant with a wife and kids, who has done nothing wrong and is trying to achieve the American dream, is threatened with getting kicked out of a house he has actually qualified for a mortgage to purchase.

Lisa Jones, from the New York State Attorney General's office, after hearing the story, did not want to foreclose on the house but instead wants to have HUD get their money faster by taking HUD's cut out of escrow once the sales contract between Seybou Douma and Adreana Langston is signed and the mortgage closes. Only Lisa Jones told Adreana Langston that due to Bronx Surrogate Court's run arounds she had no choice but to turn the case over to Manfredi, who, we imagine, only gets paid on the number of foreclosures he completes, not on the number of innocent families he keeps from being evicted while HUD still gets their money.

The New York City Environmental Department is owed money from a water bill run up by an illegal tenant that was squatting in the home before Seybou Douma occupied it. That water bill could also be paid more quickly from the escrow proceeds than it would be paid if the home went into foreclosure.

And all of this, all of it, is being held up by the administrative run around going on at Bronx Surrogate Court.

At this point, all any of us want is for the Bronx Surrogate Court to either A) Lift the limit on Adreana's Letters of Administration without forcing her to be bonded, so that she may sign the sales contract with Douma OR B) Appoint the third party Administrator Douma is recommending so that the third party Administrator can sign the sale contract. In either case HUD would get paid and the New York City Environmental Department would get paid and Seybou Douma can get a house that he reclaimed from squatters and has already paid money to have fixed up from the damage done by the squatters.

We all believe that once Bronx Surrogate Court reviews Bolaji's petition they will grant it. They are just taking WAAAAY too long to review it.

It is for this reason that we are asking you, Honorable Judge Ronnie Abrams, to please NOT give the go ahead to the foreclosure at this time. If we are wrong and there is any influence you *do* have over Bronx Surrogate Court, we ask you to wield it to assist in the expeditious sale of this property to Seybou Douma which would get HUD their money faster than if you granted the go ahead to the foreclosure.

Please note that we wrote a letter very much like this to The Hon. Janet DiFiore back in 2019 to alert her to the issues going on with the Bronx Surrogate Court. We sent it certified mail and got no response. You can read a copy of it at <https://bit.ly/HonJanetDiFiore>.

Thank you very much for reading this letter.

Sincerely,  
Adreana Langston  
Seybou Douma  
James Crawford



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Even if a litigant has consulted with Clinic staff, unless they retain other counsel and that counsel enters a notice of appearance, they remain unrepresented; are responsible for doing whatever is necessary in connection with the case; and must still submit all court papers to the Pro Se Intake Unit, located in Room 105 of the Daniel Patrick Moynihan Courthouse, 40 Foley Square, New York, New York, or by following the court's instructions for filing via email as a pro se litigant.

### The Clinic Can:

- Assist with amending complaints and responding to motions to dismiss;
- Represent litigants for settlement purposes and, in limited circumstances, for depositions;
- Assist with written discovery;
- Recruit pro bono counsel for depositions and trial; and
- Assist with oppositions to summary judgment.

***Clinic staff cannot assist with habeas cases or criminal matters.***

NYLAG may also be unable to assist if it determines, in its professional legal judgement, that (i) you have refused to cooperate with the Clinic's counsel or follow the Clinic's advice; (ii) any assistance would be unreasonably difficult for NYLAG to carry out; or (iii) your case is or will become frivolous, unreasonable, groundless, or without merit.

### Contacting the Clinic:

To contact the clinic and request a copy of our retainer, please call (212) 659-6190 and leave a message or write to us at the following address:

NYLAG Legal Clinic for Pro Se Litigants  
Thurgood Marshall Federal Courthouse  
Room LL22  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Please mail a signed retainer back to the clinic at the above address. Once the paperwork is received, clinic staff will contact you. It may take up to two weeks.

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